

#### **Leaving China?**

Did you know that you can end your enrollment with the Smart Traveler **Enrollment Program** (STEP) by visiting the step.state.gov site? If you previously submitted a paper enrollment form to the U.S. consulate, you may end your enrollment by sending an email request to: ShanghaiACS@sta te.gov.

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# Shanghai Consulate News for Americans

Issue 60

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## **Holiday Safety and Security**

It has become a common fad to see an increase in theft and robberies during holiday season. China is no different.

Purse snatchings and pickpocket thefts are the most common of these crimes. These incidents are known to happen in shopping areas and other public places. Pockets, purses, and backpacks are picked or surreptitiously cut resulting in the loss of money, credit cards, and other valuable property.

The thieves often work in teams and are usually very good at concealing their intentions. While there is no foolproof method of eluding thieves, the information below may help reduce the possibility of you becoming a victim:

1. Before leaving the house, think about ways to protect yourself. Think about what you are planning to purchase and take only the necessary amount you believe you will need. Likewise, only bring the credit cards you are likely to use. Consider not bringing your identification cards that are only valid in the US. Don't take valuable jewelry and watches with you. Separate valuables. In general do not carry anything in your wallet or purse that you are not willing to lose.

- 2. Reduce the possibility of becoming a victim by securing valuables in other areas of your person not only your purse or wallet. NEVER FLASH MONEY AROUND.
- 3. Don't make it easy for the thief. Don't carry large amounts of money in easily accessible jacket pockets or purses. Don't use a wallet. Use your front pants pockets and inside shirt pockets for your money and other valuables. Placing valuables in a purse around your neck or shoulder and secured inside a shirt, sweater or jacket is a useful habit to get into. Waist packs are better than purses or handbags, but they should also be hidden under a shirt or coat.
- 4. Never advertise your intention to spend a large amount of money. Why become a prime target? Be ready to pay before you get to cashier.
- 5. Avoid shopping alone.
- 6. Always be aware of your surroundings. Look at people near you and watch for "accidental" nudging and touching. Pay attention to people that appear to be paying attention to you.

The precautions listed above can help to make you a harder target. By making yourself a difficult target you can help ensure your own safety and that of your family. Be safe!

#### **American Citizen Services (ACS) Contact Information**

U.S. Consulate General, Shanghai, China, 1038 West Nanjing Road, 8/F Westgate Mall 梅龙镇广场 (Méi Lóng Zhèn Guǎng Chǎng)

Routine Services: 8:00am - 11:30am Passport Pickups: 1:00pm - 3:00pm Mon - Fri \*Closed on Wednesday afternoons, weekends, and holidays.

After Hours Emergencies: (86-21) 3217-4650

Homepage: shanghai.usembassy-china.org.cn/service.html

## **Upcoming Holidays & Other Closures**

A full list of all of our holiday closures is online at http://shanghai.usembassy-china.org.cn/holidays.html. The ACS Unit will be *CLOSED* to the public on:

### <u>February 9-13, 2013, Saturday - Wednesday</u> Chinese (Lunar) New Year

中国(农历)新年 Zhōngguó (Nónglì) Xīnnián

### <u>February 18, 2013, Monday</u> President's Day

总统日 Zǒngtǒng Rì



# **Travel Warnings and Alerts**

Security reminder: It is advisable that you and your family review your personal security profile and be aware of your surroundings at all times.

Since our previous Newsletter, the U.S. Department of State has issued new **Travel Warnings** for the following countries:

| <u>Algeria</u>           | 01/19/2013 |
|--------------------------|------------|
| <u>Mali</u>              | 01/18/2013 |
| <u>Niger</u>             | 01/16/2013 |
| Kenya                    | 01/14/2013 |
| <u>Libya</u>             | 01/02/2013 |
| <u>Haiti</u>             | 12/28/2012 |
| Central African Republic |            |

 Somalia
 12/28/2012

 Nigeria
 12/26/2012

 Israel, the West Bank and Gaza

12/20/2012

Travel Warnings are issued to describe long-term, protracted

conditions that make a country dangerous or unstable. A Travel Warning is also issued when the U.S. Government's ability to assist American citizens is constrained due to the closure of an embassy or consulate or because of a drawdown of its staff. This information is available at http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis

Since our previous Newsletter, the U.S. Department of State has issued new **Travel Alerts**:

pa tw/tw/tw 1764.html.

South Pacific Cyclone Season 01/07/2013

Travel Alerts are issued to disseminate information about short-term conditions generally within a particular country or region that pose imminent risks to the security of U.S. citizens. Natural disasters, terrorist attacks, coups, anniversaries of terrorist events, election-related demonstrations or violence, and high-profile events such as international conferences or regional sports events are examples of conditions that might generate a Travel Alert. This information is available at http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis

pa\_tw/pa/pa\_1766.html.

The most up-to-date information

regarding permitted and **prohibited items** on flights can be viewed online at www.tsa.gov.

For additional information, please visit "Americans Traveling Abroad" on the U.S. Department of State website: http://travel.state.gov/visa/americans/americans\_1252.html.

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# **Shanghai Reports 6.7% Rise In Expat Population**

(From Shanghai Daily, January 9, 2013) The number of foreign citizens living in Shanghai exceeded 173,000 by the end of last year, a 6.7 percent increase compared to 2011, officials said yesterday.

They make up a quarter of such citizens on China's mainland. Most of them live in nearly 80 neighborhoods across the city, the Shanghai Exit & Entry Administration Bureau said.

In 2004, China began to allow foreign citizens to gain permanent residence and since then 1,478 had obtained their "Green Card" in Shanghai, also a quarter of the country's total, Guo Jianxin, the bureau's director, said.

To better serve foreign residents in the city, the bureau, along with neighborhood committees, last year launched five Foreign Service Centers in the Hongqiao area and Zizhu industrial zone of Minhang District, Lianyang community in the Pudong New Area, Xintiandi in Huangpu District and the Gaojing area of Qingpu District to provide exit and entry services.

As the city's first Foreign Service Center, the office in Hongqiao served people from countries including Australia, North Korea, the United States, Germany, the Philippines and Canada but the majority of those seeking help were South Koreans due to the makeup of the population there.

Hongqiao town, administered by the Minhang District government, is home to 23,750 overseas citizens, and over 50 percent are South Korean, making the area the largest concentration of South Korean expats in Shanghai.

Staff who work at the center speak several languages.

The idea for setting up the service center originated from the Minhang branch director of the city's Exit-Entry Administration Office.

The director, surnamed Wang, said she visited the Korean Chamber of Commerce in Minhang and learned that a number of people had difficulty in applying for temporary accommodation registration or getting extensions to work-related residence permits as they had to visit one place to pick up the forms and another to file them. The bureau for applications was in the Pudong New Area, far from Minhang. Overseas citizens are required to register within 24 hours after they enter China.

After Hongqiao, similar centers were launched in Lianyang, Zizhu, Gaojing and Xintiandi.



With the increase in the foreign population, overseas citizens are now allowed to observe the affairs of local neighborhood committee and take part in the administration of the neighborhood, the Xintiandi center said.

Five overseas observers - two Chinese with US citizenship and three people from Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan, briefed residents, assisted in voter registration and monitored an election in the Xintiandi area last August. They will continue to work with sub-committees in property management, the environment, sports and culture and offer suggestions, officials said.

Dai Qiming, an official with the Xintiandi community, said the move helped facilitate understanding between residents and committee officials.